

Spacer Use in Schools/Preschools: Advice for Parents & Carers

As of the 1st July 2012, schools and preschools in Victoria will be implementing a new policy in regards to single person spacer use.

This means that schools and preschools will no longer be able to wash, sterilise and re-use spacers and face masks from their asthma emergency kits when assisting students and children with asthma symptoms.

Spacers should always be used when administering reliever 'puffer' medication because:

- Using a spacer with a 'puffer' ensures that more medication reaches the airways
- Spacers are much easier for children to use than a 'puffer' alone, and allows school and preschool staff to help students/children during an asthma attack, often in an emergency situation
- Spacers are an essential part of the Asthma First Aid procedure that Victorian schools/preschools are instructed to follow

Asthma first aid kits should only ever be used as a back-up for when a child with asthma does not have their own spacer available, or if it is a first asthma attack or the cause of breathing difficulty is unknown. Your child's school/preschool may implement a policy where parents/carers are responsible for the cost of the spacer if one must be used from the asthma emergency kit.

Even if your child has mild asthma, it is essential that their medication and spacer (and a compatible face mask if under 5 years old) is always available to school/preschool staff. To ensure that a spacer is not left at home, we would recommend that parents/carers purchase a second spacer for their child to have with them at school/preschool at all times if possible.



For further information, please contact the Asthma Foundation of Victoria on 1800 645 130 or email schools@asthma.org.au